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December 10, 1963

Dr. James M. Burnell
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Seattle, Washington 98105

Dear Jim:

Our discussion the other day was one of the most interesting and encouraging experiences that I can remember. I am also very grateful for the printed material that you sent me with your letter of December 5.

Perhaps there is some point in the reservation that a large scale social expenditure in support of medical technology ought not to be made -- and there is no way that it can be made -- without enlightened public discussion of the issues, and more attention will certainly have to be given this in the near future. I particularly don't want to butt in to an area where I am not so well informed, but I would be happy to give the most urgent support to the necessary debate. Further, if you or Dr. Scribner feel that I could help to bring these issues to the attention to some part of the community or of the governmental agencies that are concerned with health sciences, I would be glad of any opportunities to assist.

BURNELL

John Pfeiffer, who is one of the best of the contemporary science writers, is doing an article with me concerning the "evolutionary crisis", and in our discussion I mentioned some of the problems that you are facing in Seattle. Rather than communicate second hand, may I urge you to send the same batch of material, or whatever other information you are in a position to distribute, to Mr. Pfeiffer at his home address* primarily for his own background information. You can very well rely upon him not to abuse any confidences, and more particularly, to maintain an appropriate level of dignity in any discussion of your (should I say "our") problems.

From a practical standpoint, I feel you could almost afford to sit back, if time were not so much of the essence, and just watch the inevitable unfolding of events at this stage. If the Veterans Administration is indeed going to go ahead with the establishment of dialysis centers, then all else will necessarily follow.

*P.O. Box 273
New Hope, Pennsylvania

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To the extent that further research and development -- as opposed to service -- is a financial issue, I hope that you will keep in mind my suggestion about dealing with the space agency. A personal letter addressed to Dr. Orr Reynolds, a Director of Bioscience Programs, Office of Space Sciences, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Washington 25, D.C., should bring a sympathetic response.

I look forward to an opportunity of asking you to revisit us, and in any case to maintaining contact with you concerning these urgent problems.

Cordially yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics